FIRST 2017 Annual Report

2017 First United Board of Directors

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*BC Conference non-voting corresponding member



Thank You For Your **Continuing Commitment**

Dear Friends,

2017 was a time of reflection, action, and vision building. We are ever grateful to all of you who care deeply about our community and our work.

We will continue to ask for your advice, wisdom, skills, time, and financial contributions. You have given freely and without reservation. When we receive notification of a bequest left in a long-time supporter's estate, we are humbled by the faith that you have in us.

We are on the cusp of a new beginning in a changing community, and have much work ahead. Thank you for taking that journey with us – for being part of our long history of belief and hope for a community where all people can thrive.

Carren Lansdonne

slen hanyon

The Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne Executive Director

Stan Lanyon Chair, Board of Directors (2018)



Thanks to *you*, our work changes lives. Read on to learn about our programs:

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12 DAILY CALLS FOR ASSISTANCE

1,600 **PEOPLE SERVED**

15 COMMUNITY SERVICE PARTNERSHIPS

FULL-TIME ADVOCATES



For community members who live with the challenges of poverty, low literacy, and discrimination, legal support can mean the difference between a home and the street.

When Renee moved to Vancouver from her reserve in Northern BC with her two young daughters she had a hard time finding a place to live. She finally found an apartment that she could afford, but it was so poorly maintained by the landlord that the girls were getting colds and sore throats from the draughty windows and mould in the walls.

Renee asked us for help and our advocates worked with a team of elders and social workers to get the family safely re-housed. We also successfully made a claim for damages when Renee moved out of her old suite. The needs of each person we serve – housing, income, security, employment, and family issues - remain at the centre of all our legal advocacy work.

First United's advocacy program strives to uphold the rights of those who are marginalized and disenfranchised. The work is not easy...our assistance provides support and hope for many.

– Anonymous donor



It was a warm, sunny day when we asked several people what the most important thing was they were keeping in storage. Here are their answers:

"Photos of my kids, regular stuff – you know, we all used to have homes at one point."

"The 'day-to-days', like my clothes and toothbrush" "All my heaviest things – carrying those around all day, especially in this hot weather, will make you real old, real fast."

"My paperwork from my last job and my current job hunt process – I've got to keep track of all that!"



We are thrilled to support the great work of First United. We fund projects that we know will have greater impact on those in Vancouver who are currently experiencing homelessness – these projects are often poorly funded, or not funded at all. We hope to maintain a strong partnership for years to come and change the lives of those in Vancouver who need our support.

- Hockey Helps the Homeless - Vancouver Organizing Committee



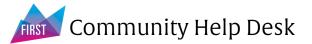


Spiritual Care

Under the leadership of The Rev. Jim Hatherly, spirit programs responded to community needs in the wake of the opioid-poisoning crisis last year. We served as the satellite site for street ministry for six students enrolled in Vancouver School of Theology's Clinical Pastoral Care Program through Vancouver General Hospital. We also revived or Listening Ministry. As the tally of opioid-poisoning deaths in 2017 grew to over 300 in Vancouver (over 6,200 fentanyl-related calls attended by first responders), we met the increased need for memorial services for community members and their families without the means to pay for a regular service.

With all the headlines about fentanyl, what is often missing is the very human story. While fentanyl and its opioid kin have taken the lives of over 1,400 people in 2017 in BC alone, every person who has died from opioid poisoning is unique and loved. This is everyone's story. Spiritual care is only a part of what we are all called to do. Love one another. Watch out for one another. Speak with courage and compassion to the forces of darkness that have overwhelmed us.

- The Rev. Jim Hatherly, Director of Community Ministry



In 2017 we began major renovations to the Community Help Desk space. Formerly known as *Reception* and *The Hub*, the help desk now offers a more dignified experience for community members by providing shorter wait times and increased privacy. The space is larger, more accessible, and provides better sight lines into the drop-in area, thus increasing security for all and decreasing response times to emergencies.

The expanded space has allowed for the return of an on-site medical room so that shelter residents can meet with health care professionals at home instead of traveling to a clinic; there is also a designated space for storing our naloxone kits (First United became a registered site for the Take Home Naloxone Program in March 2018 and many of our staff have been trained to administer injections.)

The help desk continues to offer services including free toiletries, showers, emergency clothing, phone/mail/fax services, harm reduction supplies, and referrals to other community services to the approximately 500 community members accessing the program each day. Our foot-care program also operates out of the help desk.

When you're on your feet all day, without a chance to change your socks or shoes, sweaty feet lead to 'street feet'. This causes an embarrassing 'anti-people' smell that leads to larger self-confidence issues. It's a matter of dignity.

- Anonymous foot-care participant

75

DOSES OF

NALOXONE

ADMINISTERED ON SITE

MAILING ADDRESS FOR

400

COMMUNITY

MEMBERS

75

SHOWERS

PER DAY







Thank you for making life better for thousands of people in our community. Our work depends on the deep commitment of individuals, faith congregations, small business owners and corporate leaders, community groups, institutional and government funders.

We are indeed fortunate to depend on your long-time trust and dedication, and are profoundly moved by the breadth of support we receive. This year we give thanks to a few of our many special supporters.

361 **IN-KIND GIFTS**

1,929

FINANCIAL GIFTS

174 DONATING BOTH FINANCIALLY & IN-KIND

It was a privilege to serve meals with the warm and generous volunteers and staff at First United. They make the volunteer experience very comfortable while providing an invaluable service to our community!

Thanks to Our 2017 Supporters!

- Odlum Brown Limited



Supporting Our Meal Programs

Canadian Memorial United Church The Hare Krishna Food for Life Group The Indo-Africa Charitable Society Odlum Brown Ltd. Open Hearts Helping Hands – Seventh Day Adventists Peace Meal Richmond Steel Recycling Ltd. St. David's United Church – West Vancouver Shaughnessy Heights United Church Those Guys Wells Fargo Wolridge Mahon Chartered Professional Accountants LLP. Anonymous (15) Juanita Austin Nora Batchelor Marion & Jack Best Joyce Brown The Rev. Bob & Joan Burrows John & Sharon Cashore Joan & Jan Drabek M. Duff Yvonne & David Ellis

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Memorial Foundation

HOCKEY HELPS

We have done our best to include everyone who contributed in the categories above. Please contact us at 604.681.8365 ext. 119 if we have made an error in your acknowledgment

Giving For 20+ Consecutive Years

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